

Geographic Names: Roles, Rhetoric, and Resistance

Mark Monmonier

Professor of Geography

Syracuse University

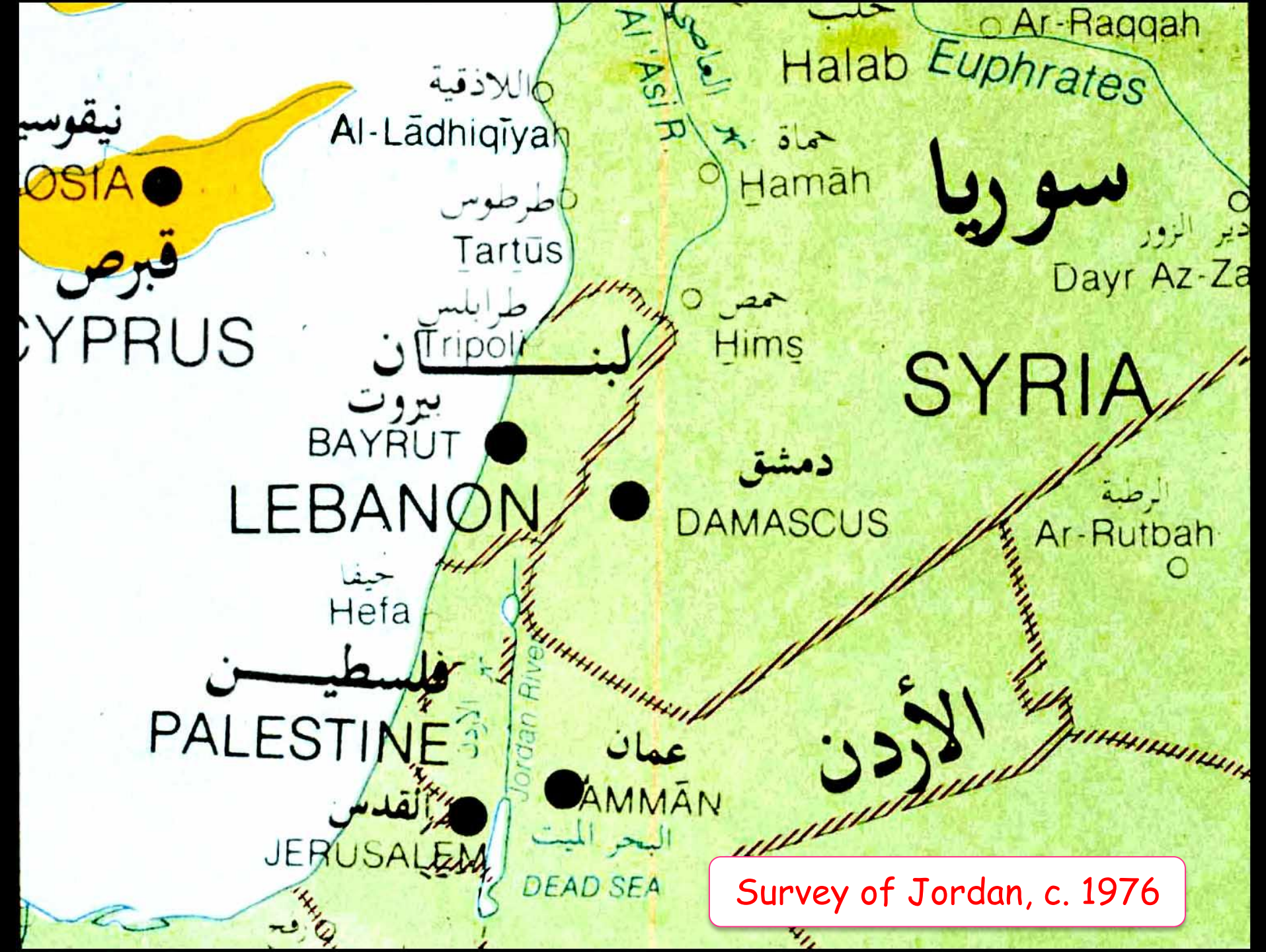


Roles of Geographic Names

- ❖ **Unique identifier** of places and geographic features
- ❖ **Link** between map symbols and everyday **language**
- ❖ **Commemorate** people, events, other places, . . .

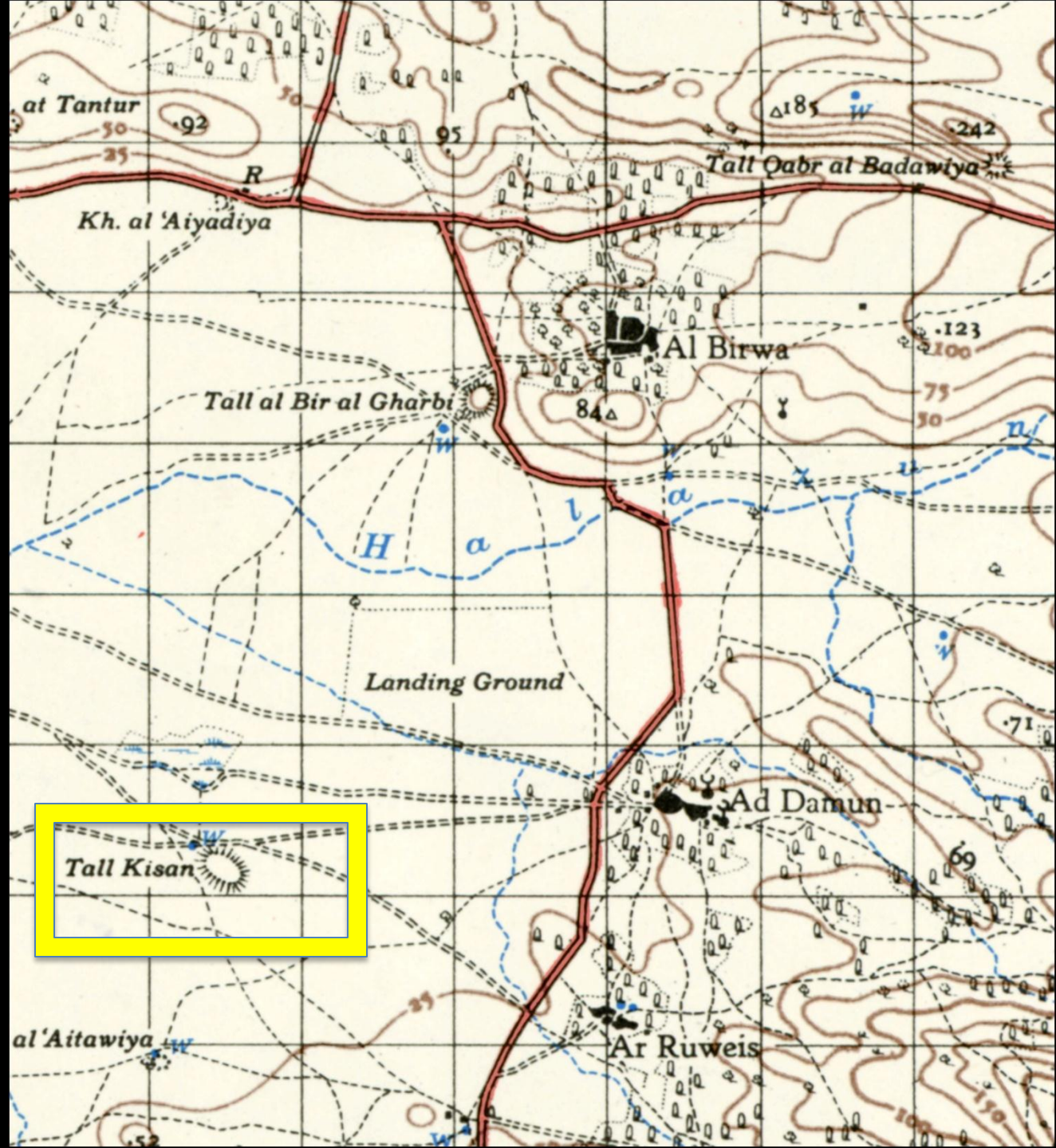
Rhetoric of Geographic Names

- ❖ **Conservative** = resistant to impulsive change
- ❖ A **public good**, appropriate for bureaucratic oversight
- ❖ The **romance** of geographic names and the defense of **historical authenticity**

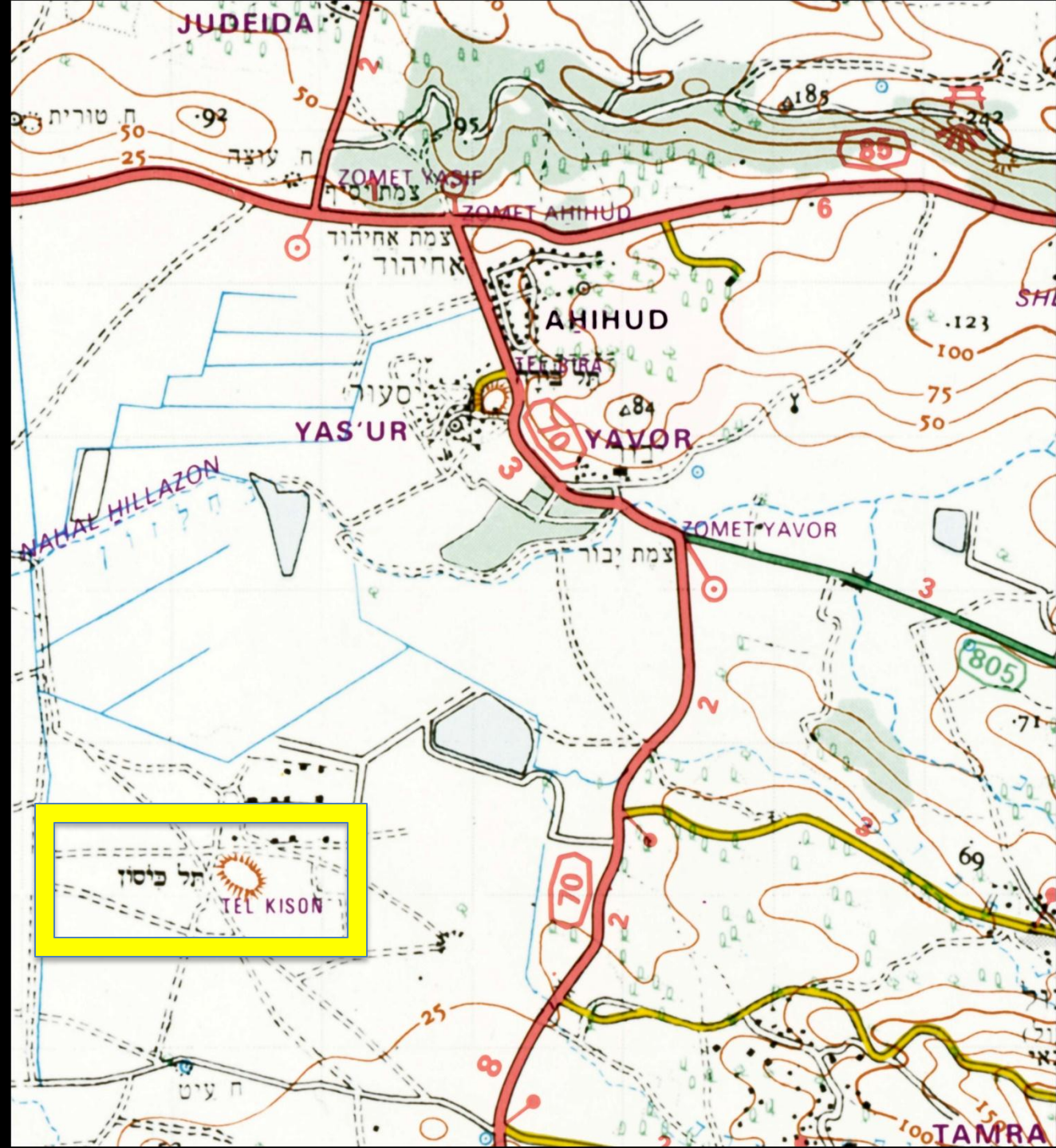


Survey of Jordan, c. 1976

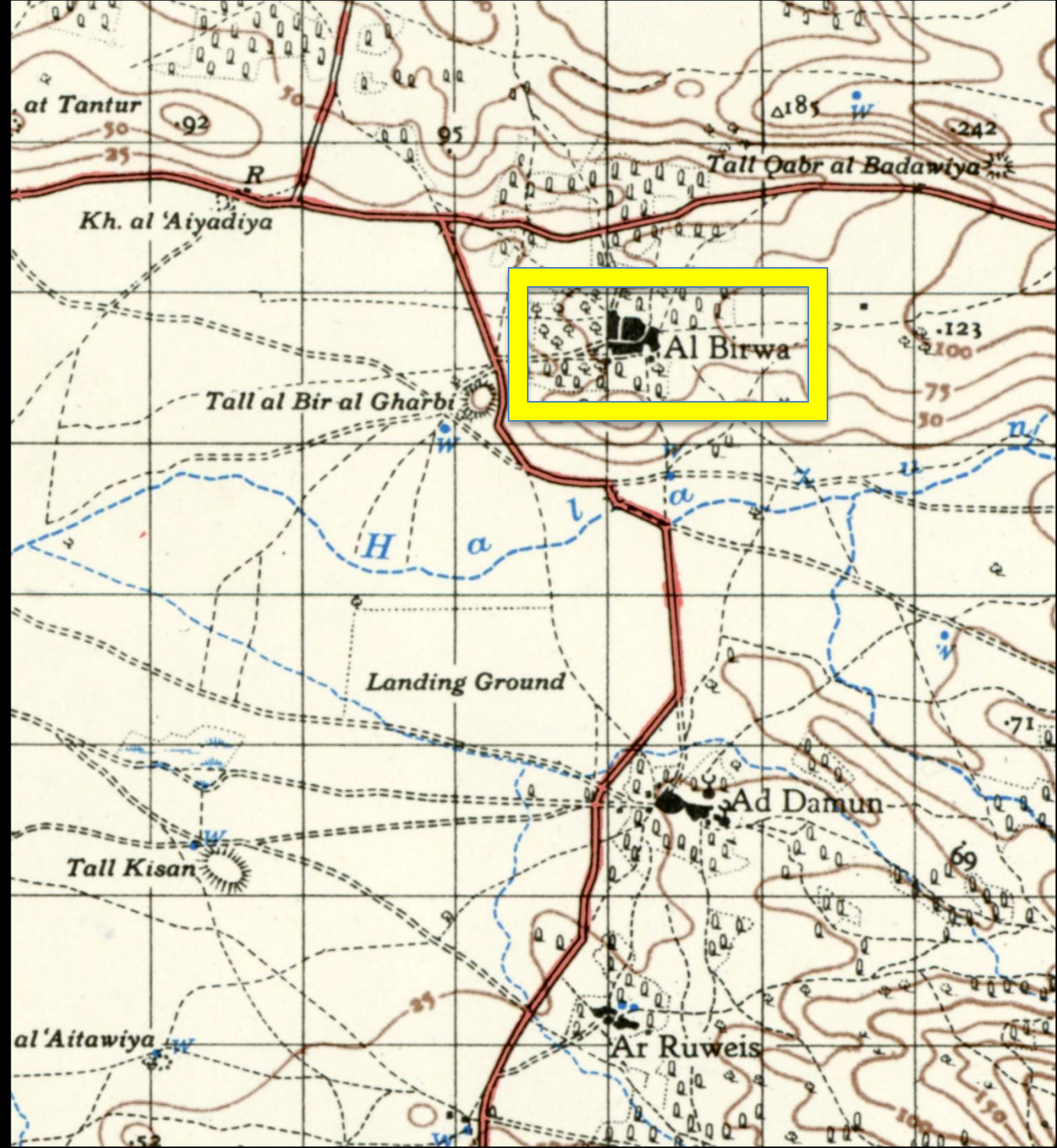
Survey of
Palestine, 1943



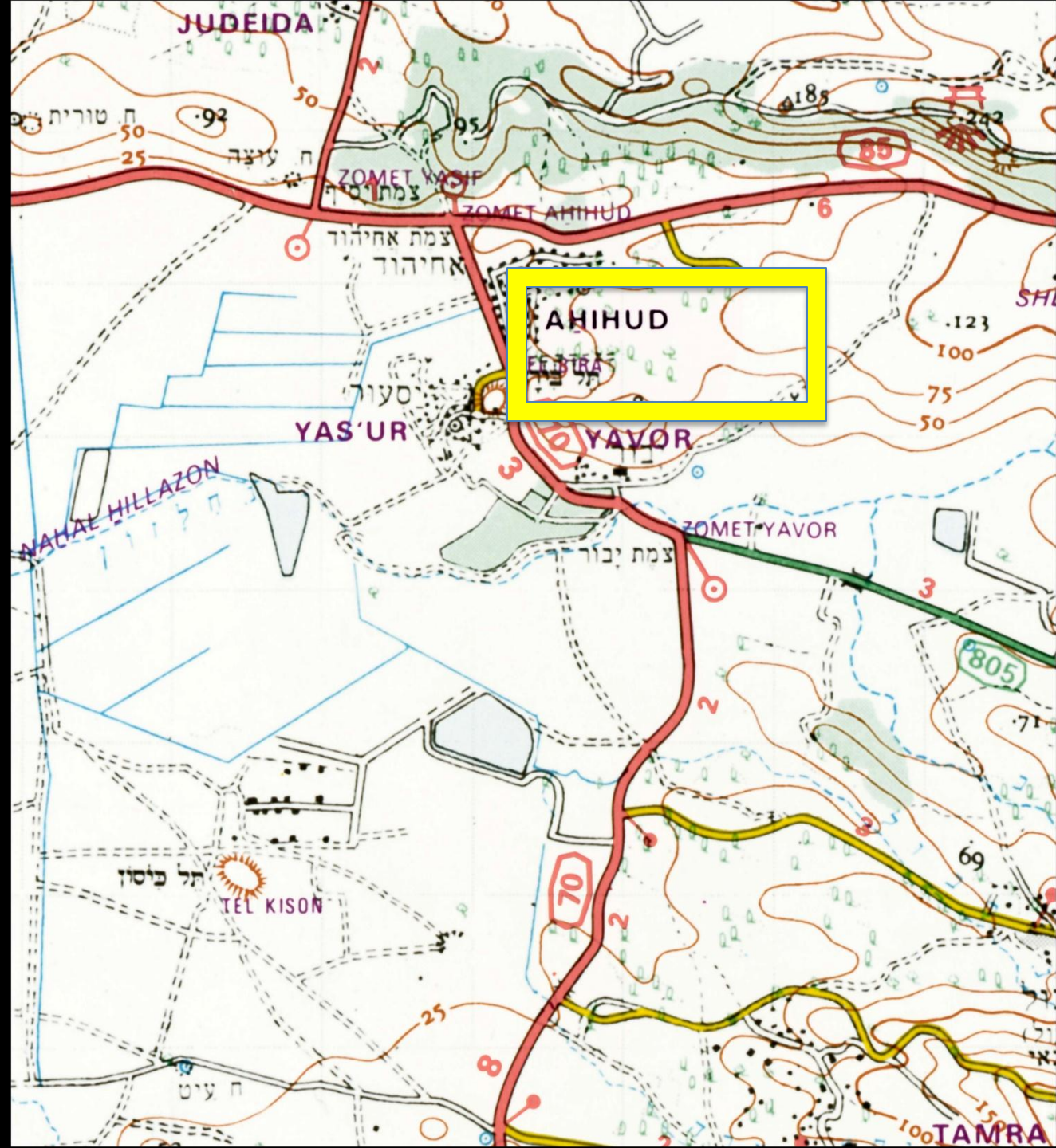
Survey of
Israel, 1988

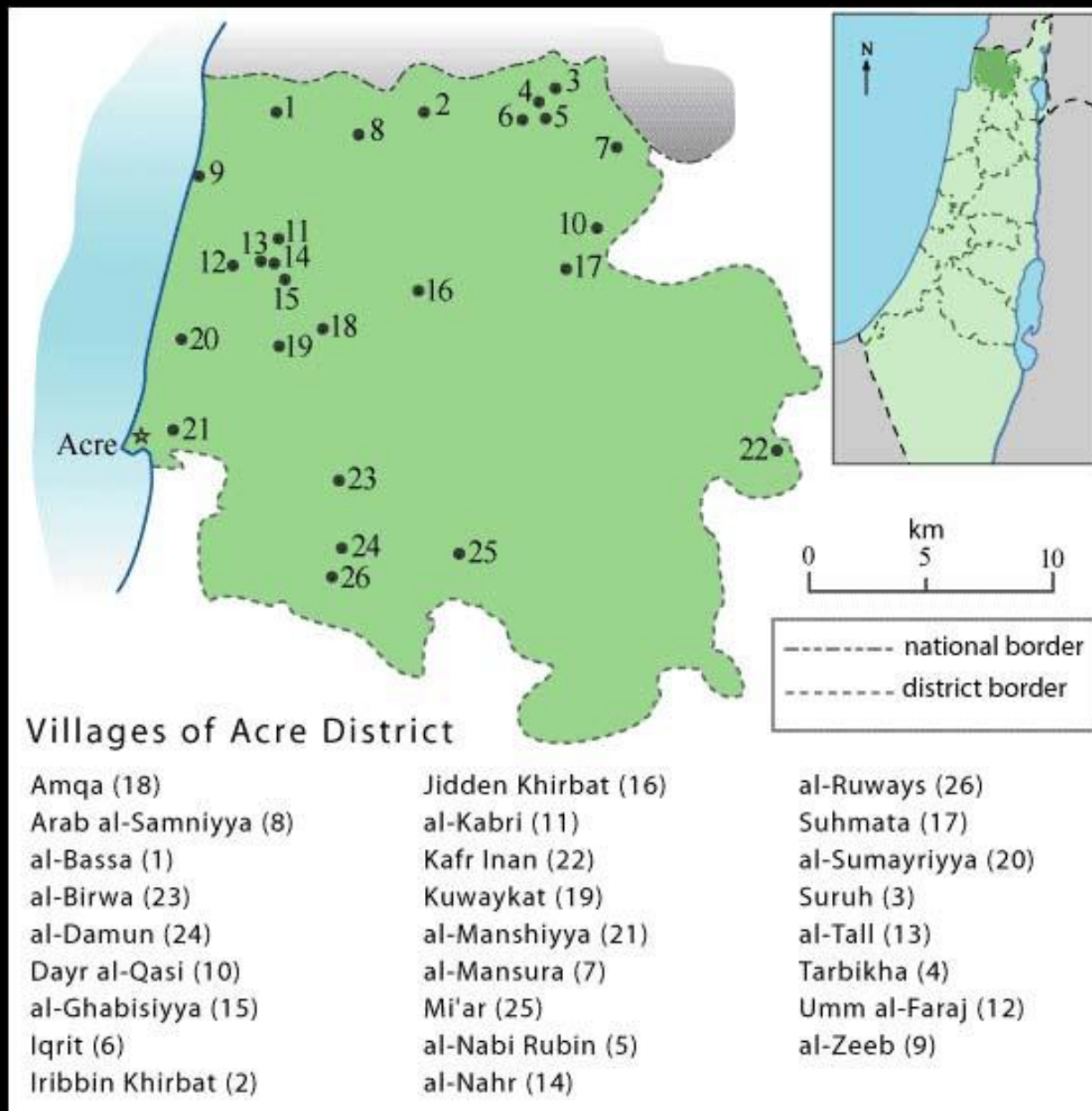


Survey of
Palestine, 1943



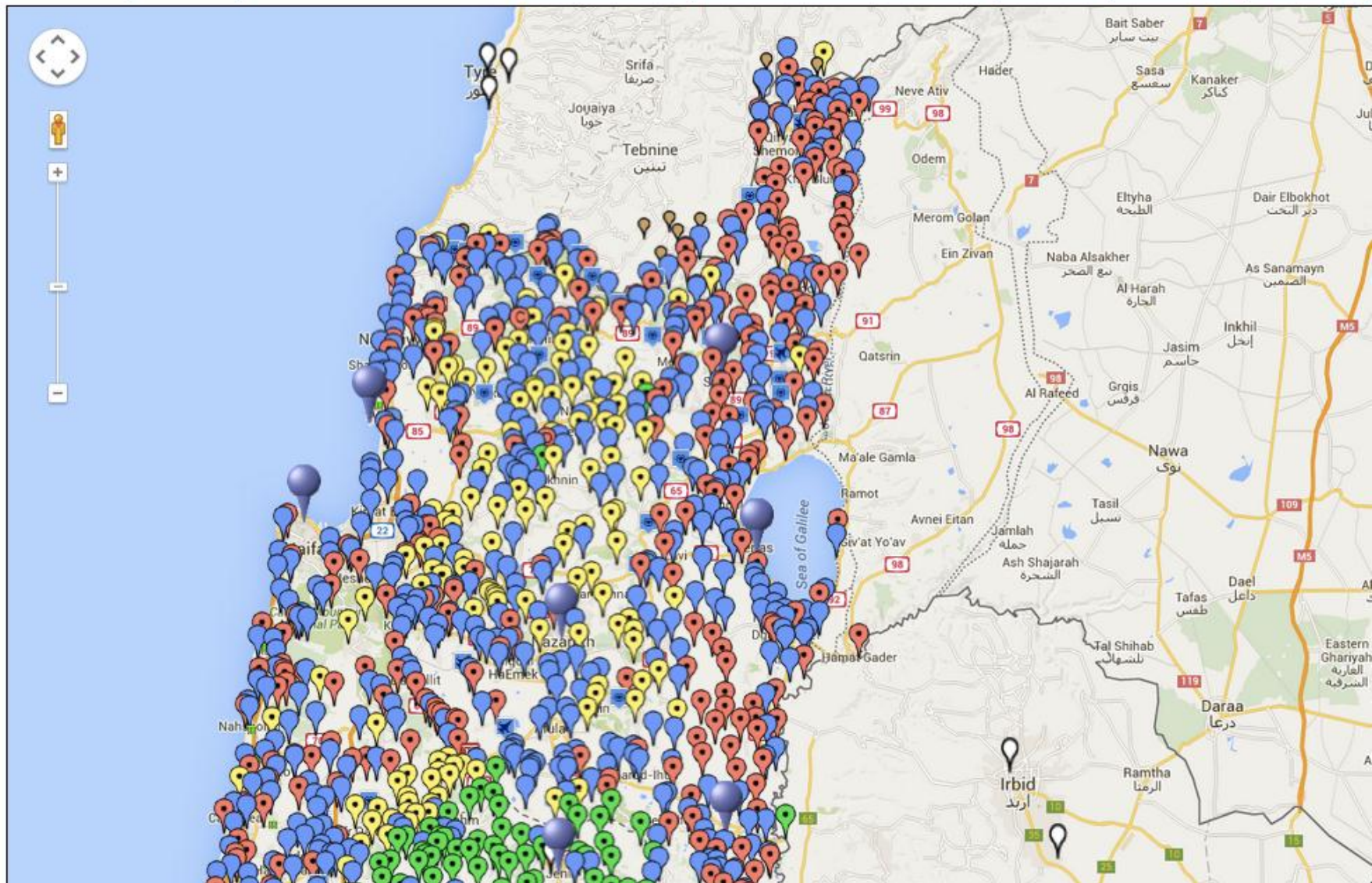
Survey of
Israel, 1988





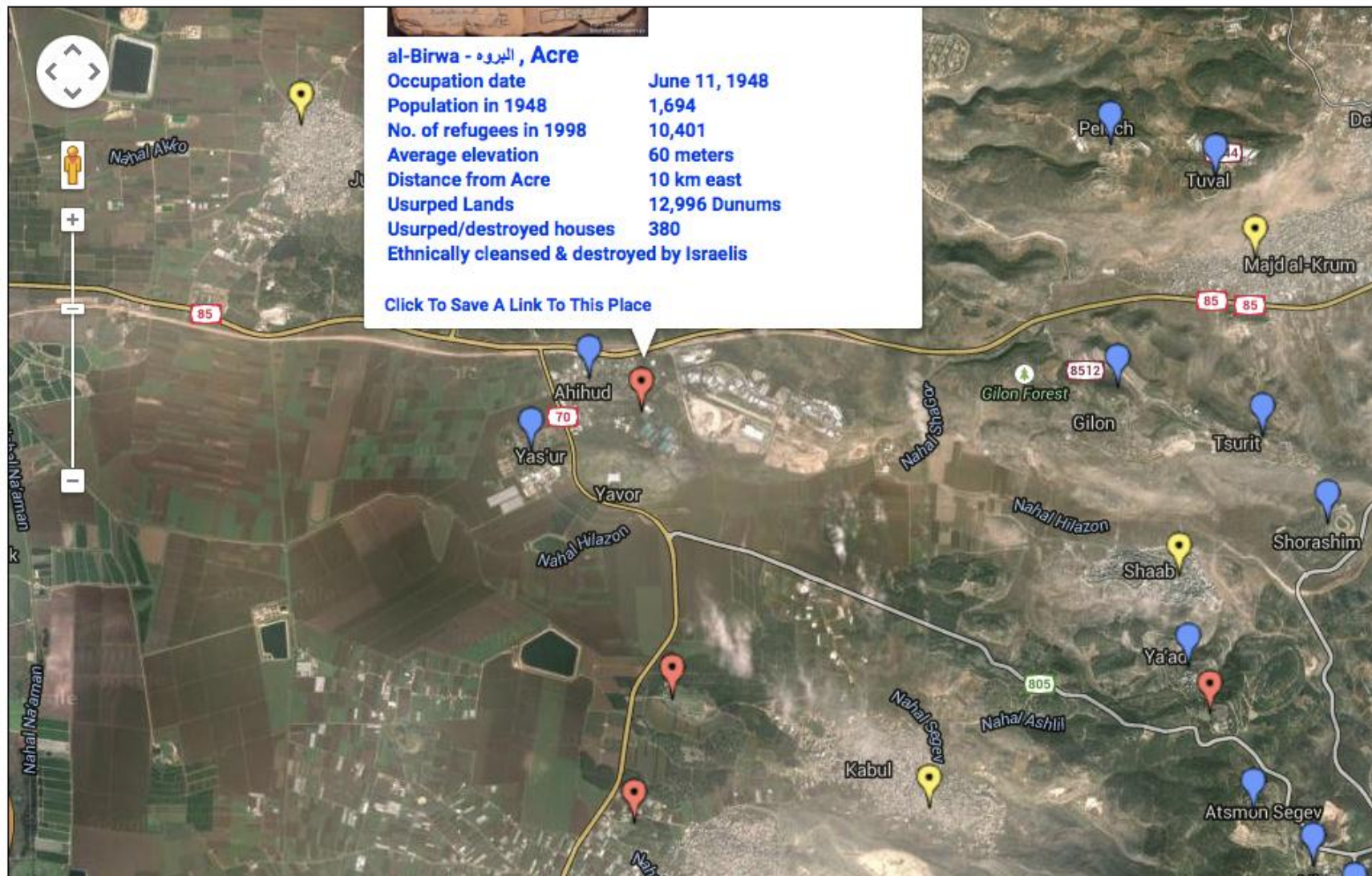
PalestineRemembered.com		The Home of Ethnically Cleansed & Occupied Palestinians			Satellite View	Search	Donate	Contact Us	النسخة العربية
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- Baysan
- Beersheba
- Bethlehem
- Gaza
- Haifa
- Hebron
- Jaffa
- Jericho
- Jerusalem
- Jinin
- Nablus
- Nazareth
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- al-Ramla
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Nablus
Nazareth
Ramallah
al-Ramla
Safad
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S E A O F

National Geographic
Society (www.ngs.org), 2000

3038
J A P
1071
2158
294
333
282
243
364
Y A M A T O R I S E
N

2500

(E A S T S E A)

Tok Do
(Liancourt Rocks)

2315

Hegura Jima
Nanatsu Shima
Wajima
NOTO HANTŌ
Togi

SEA OF JAPAN (East Sea)

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WorldAtlas.com,
2015

WorldAtlas.Com



WorldAtlas.com,
2015

Google Maps,
2015

Enlargement
of frame



Persian Gulf
(Arabian Gulf)

Zoomed in further

Google Maps,
IP address
in Iran, 2015

Enlargement
of frame




Screen shot from GulfNews.com,
"How Google Is Showing Arabian
Gulf on Maps," 13 August 2015

geonames.nga.mil

GeoNames Search Results

Total Number of Names in query: 26

Total Number of Features in query: 2

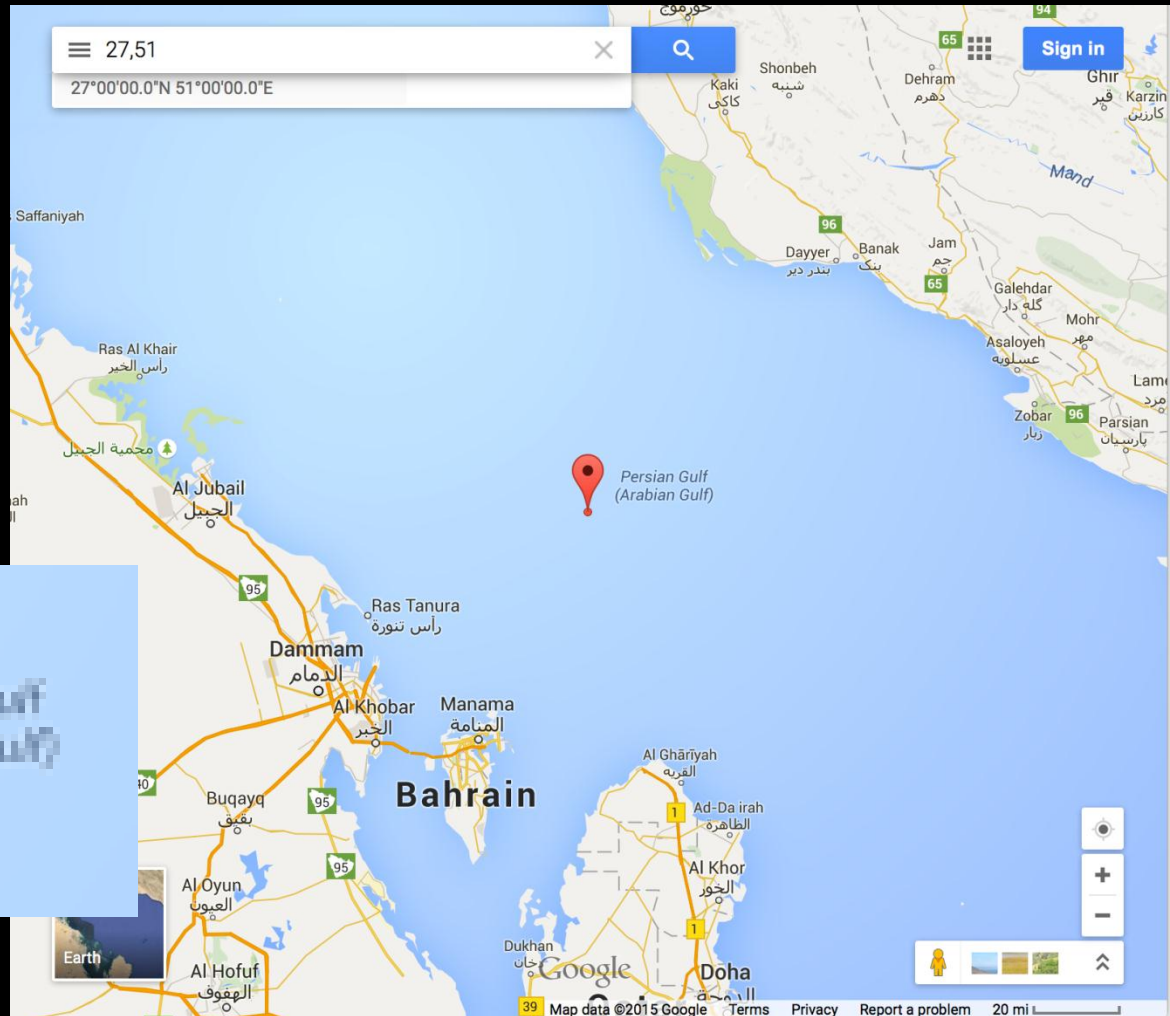
Records 1 through 26 

The geographic names in this database are provided for the guidance of and use by the Federal Government and for the information of the general public.
The names, variants, and associated data may not reflect the views of the United States Government on the sovereignty over geographic features.

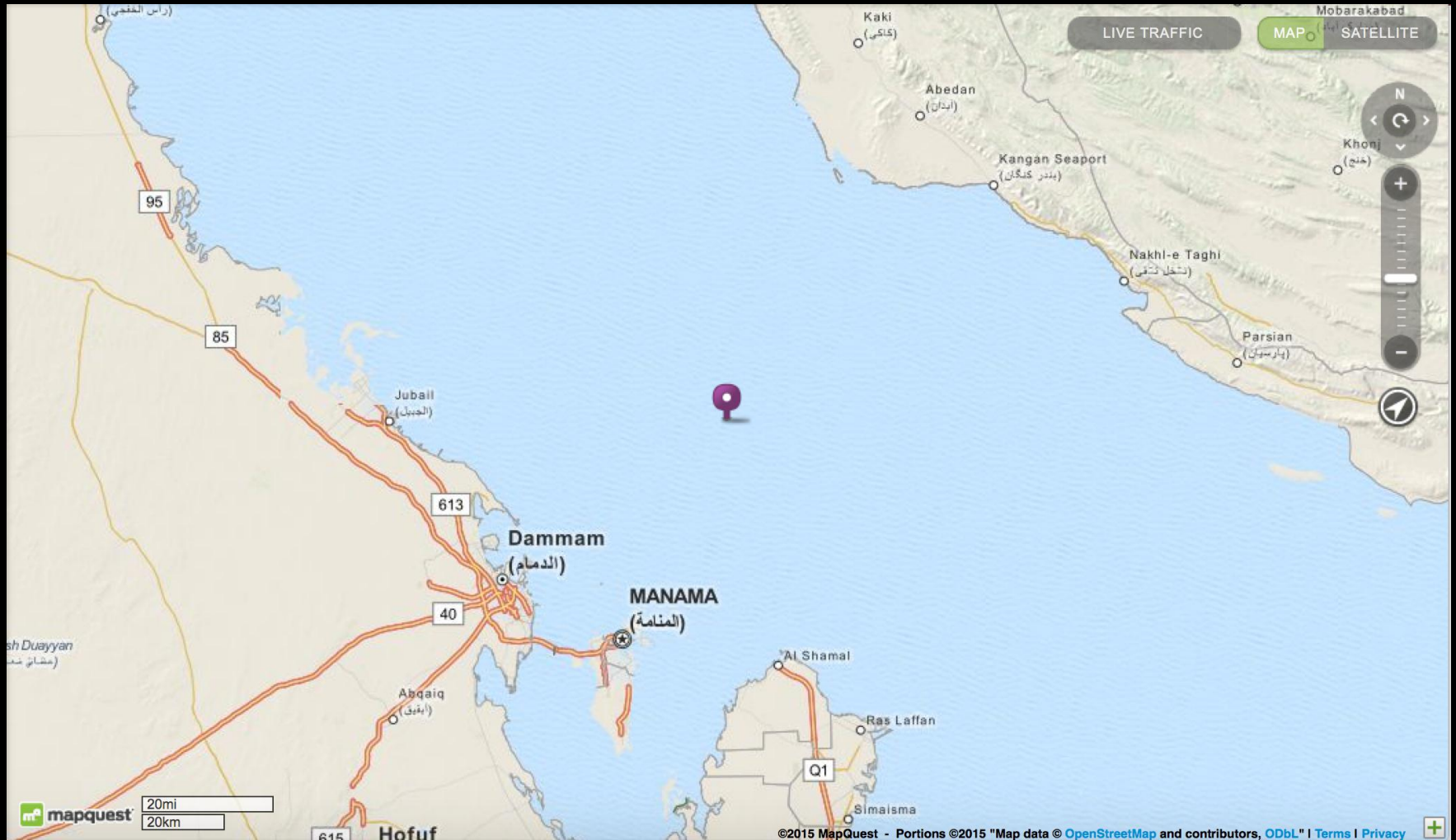
Name (Type)	Geopolitical Entity Name (Code)	First-Order Administrative Division Name (Code)	Latitude, Longitude DMS (DD)	MGRS	Feature Designation (Code)	Display Location Using
Persian Gulf (Conventional - C) Khalīj al 'Ajam (Variant - V) Arab Gulf (Variant - V) Al-Khalij al-Arabi (Variant - V) Arabian Gulf (Variant - V) Basra Körfezi (Variant - V) Daryā yi Bandar Abū Shehr (Variant - V) Khalīj Fāris (Variant - V) Al Khalīj al Fārisī (Variant - V) Khalīj-e Fārs (Variant - V) Khalīj-i Fārs (Variant - V) The Gulf (Variant - V) Gulf of Iran (Variant - V) Persian-Arabian Gulf (Variant - V) Persidski Zaliv (Variant - V)	Oceans (OS)	Oceans (general) (OS00)	27° 00' 00" N, 051° 00' 00" E (27, 51)	39RWK0000086435	gulf (GULF)	Google Maps MapQuest
United Arab Emirates (Conventional - C) Al Imārāt al 'Arabīyah al Muttahidah (Approved - N)						

Google Maps, from the NGA Website

Enlargement of
area around pin

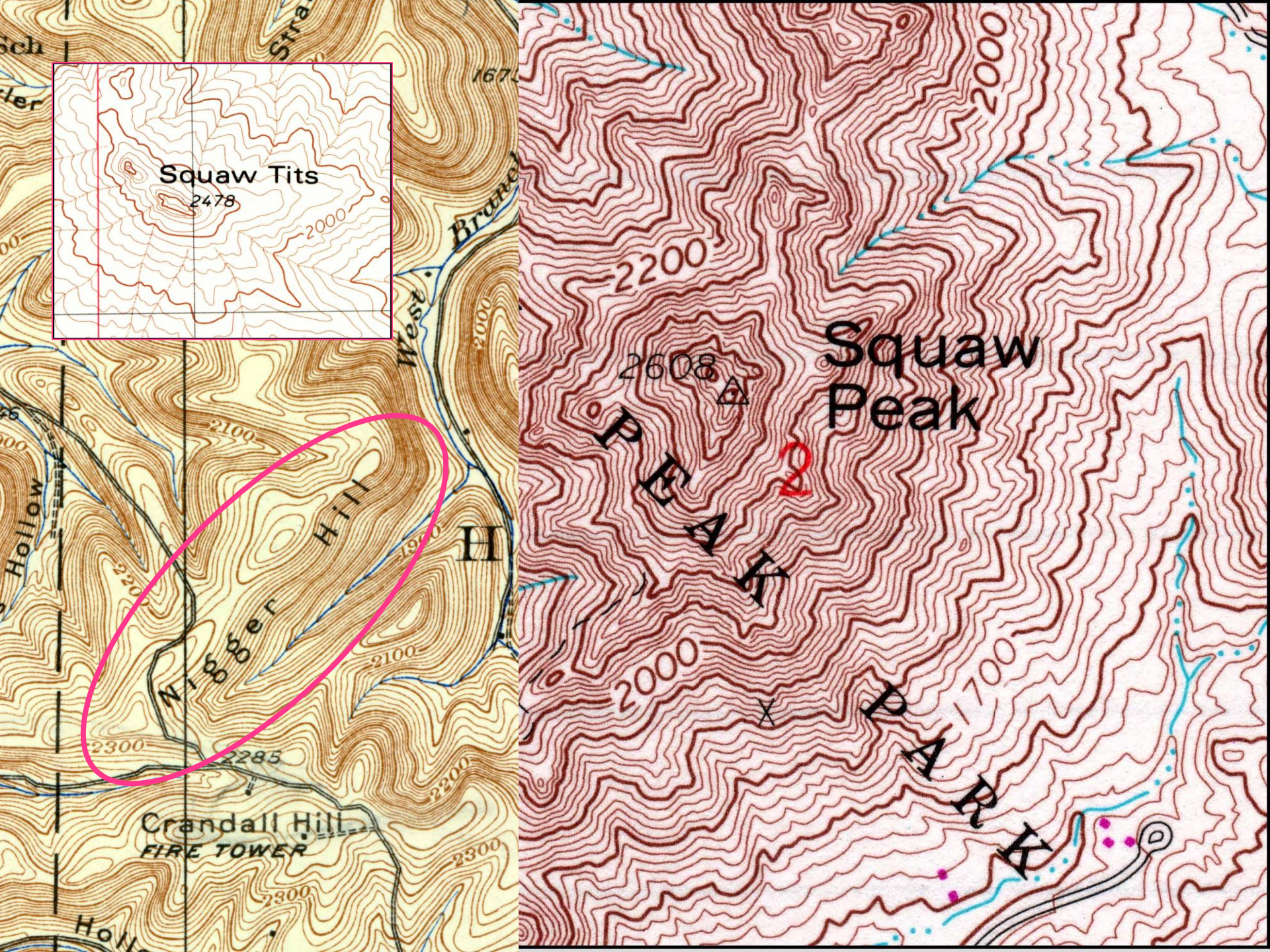


MapQuest, from the NGA Website



MapQuest, direct access





USGS instructions

- Pre 1928: no specific written guidance
- 1928: codified name-checking
 - “The importance of a complete and authentic record of feature names is so great that nothing should be left for memory.”
 - Confirm local usage by consulting “at least two independent authorities for each name and spelling.”
 - Map editors were to consult published maps, gazetteers, and reports of expeditions.



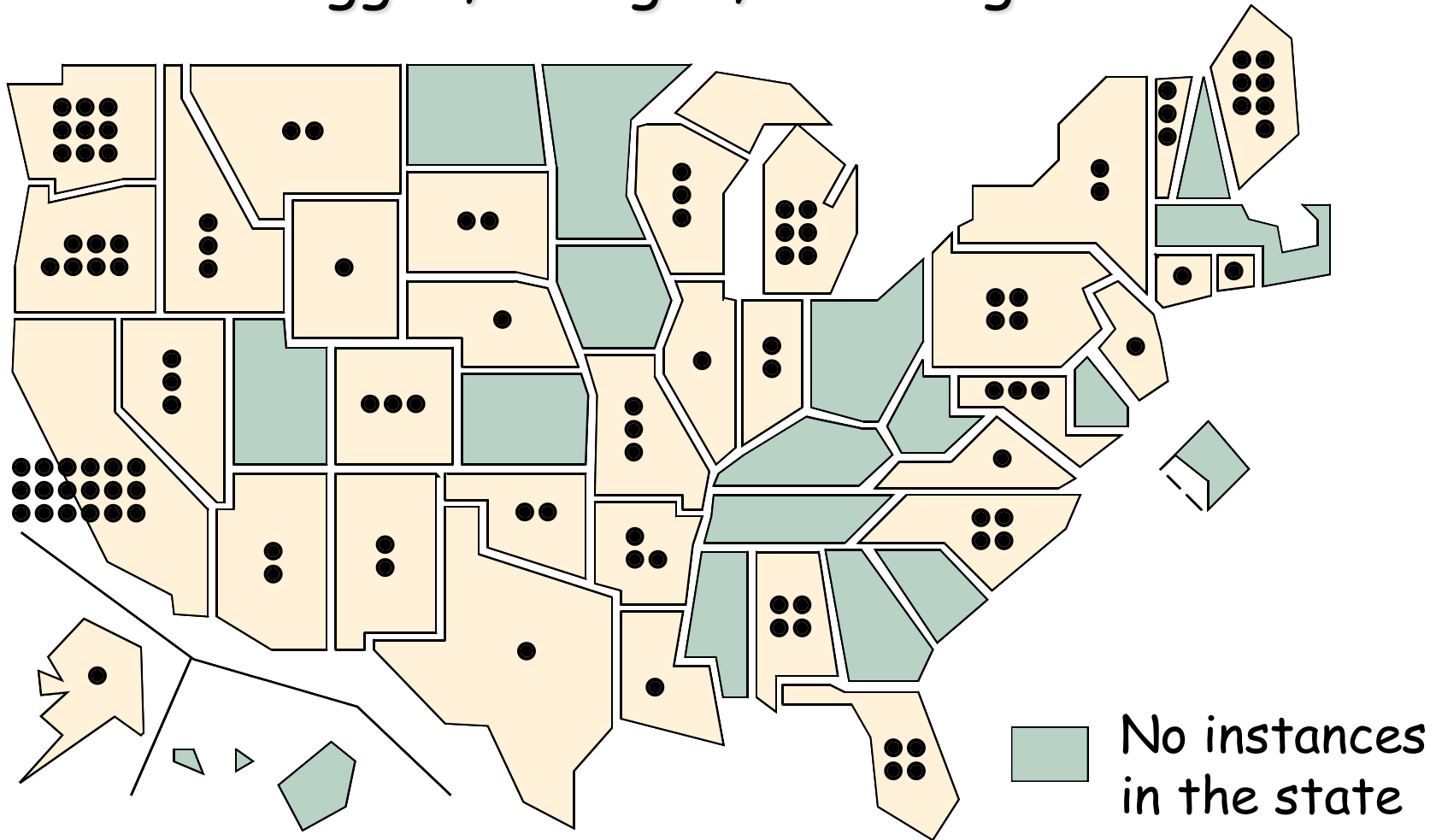
Blanket Renaming

- 1963 – “Nigger” changed to “Negro”
 - Stuart Udall (1962): “Whatever the overtones of the word were in the past, unquestionably a great many people now consider it derogatory or worse. It is like an obscenity in that avoidance of its use is common courtesy and in that its use may incur some sort of social penalty. I do not see how the Federal Government can in conscience require the use of the word in any connection.”

Blanket Renaming

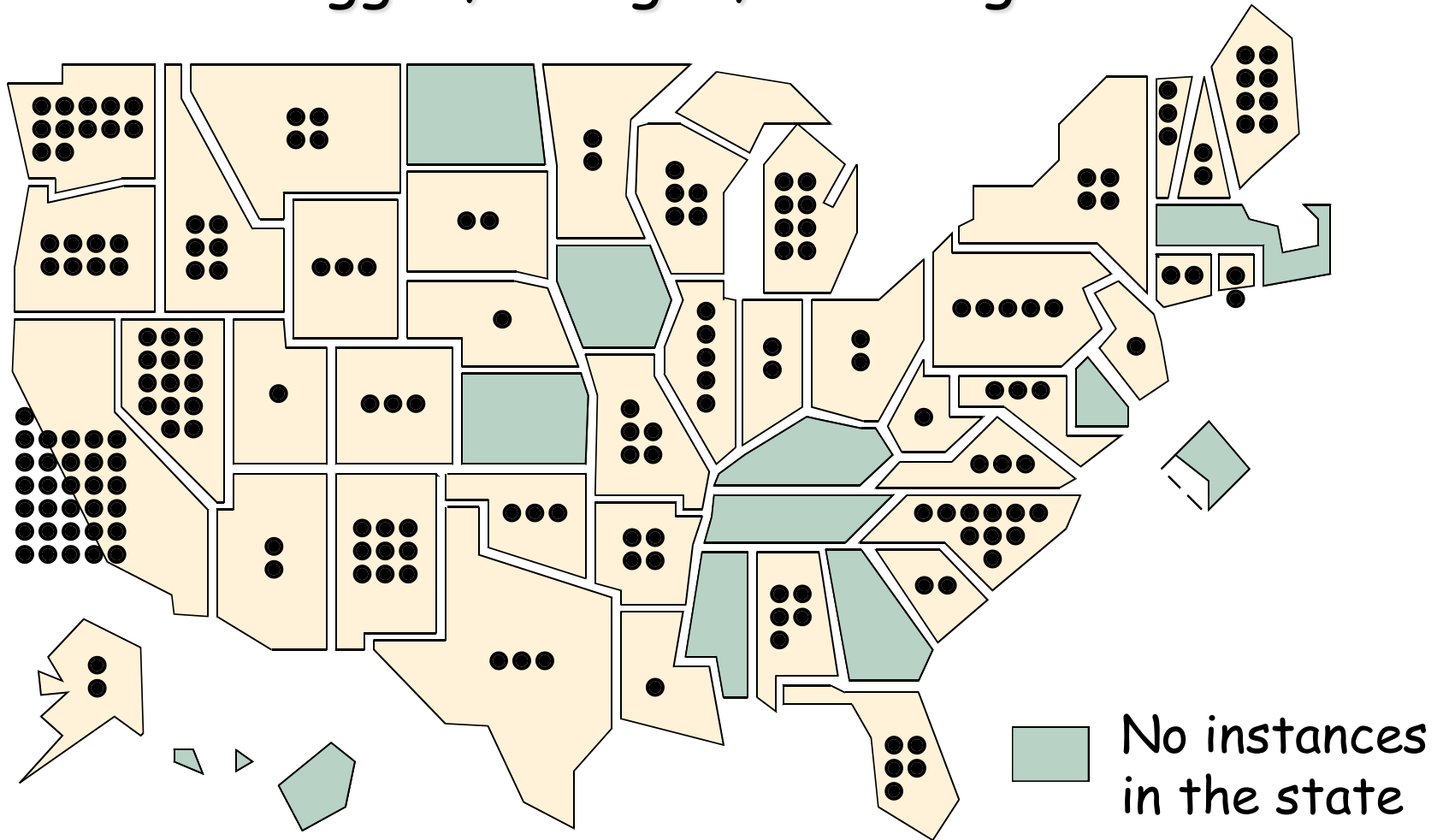
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- 1974 – “Jap” replaced with “Japanese”

Toponyms (mostly variants) containing “Nigger,” “Niger,” or “Nigar”



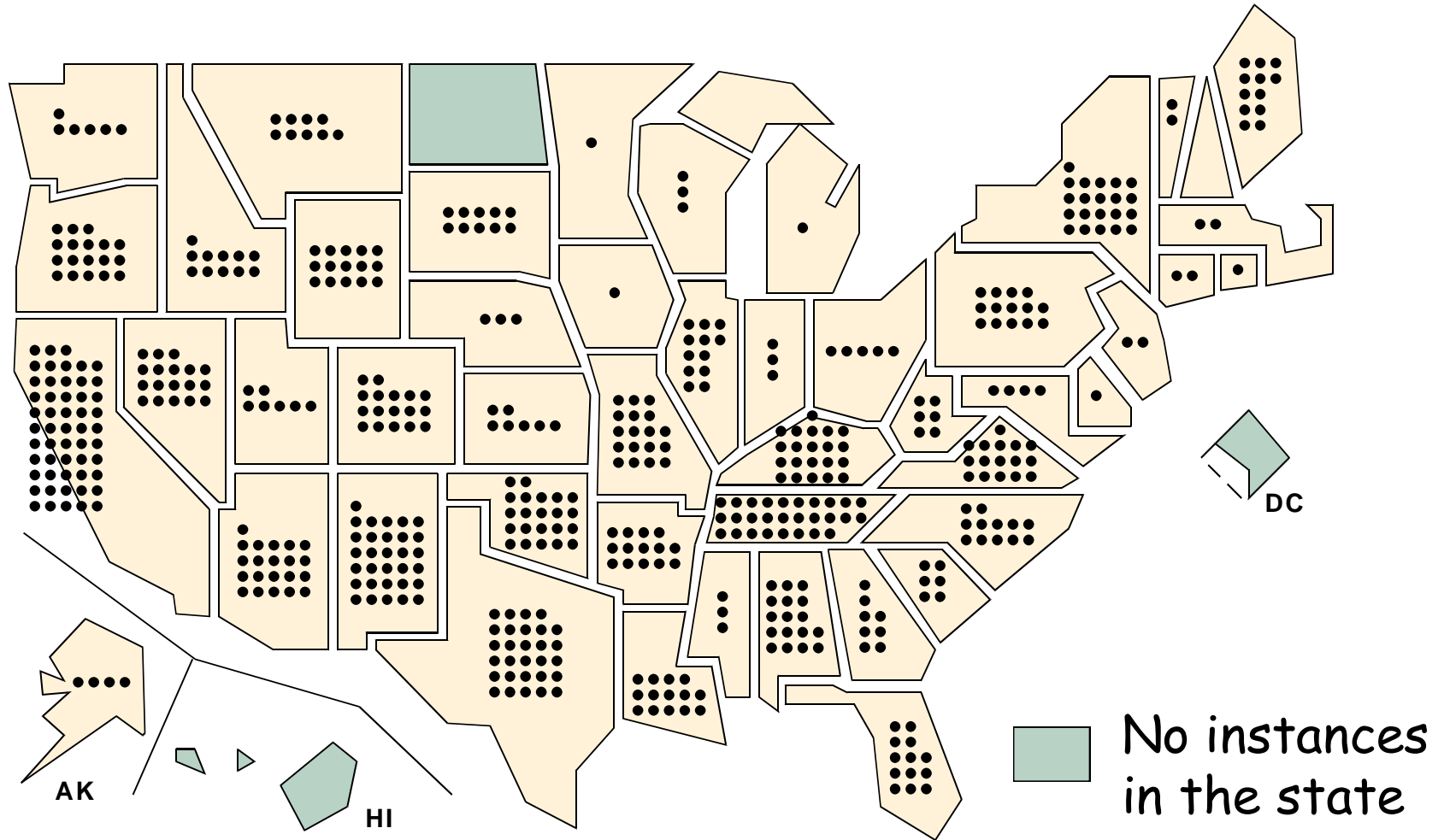
Omni Gazetteer, ca. 1990

Toponyms (mostly variants) containing “Nigger,” “Niger,” or “Nigar”



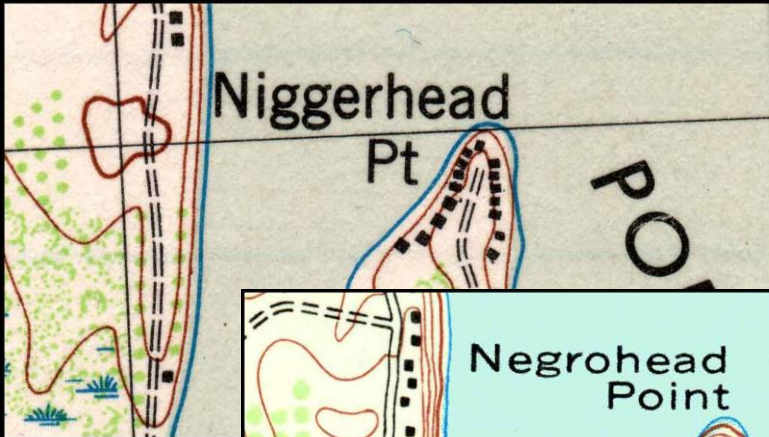
Geographic Names Information System (GNIS), 2003

Toponyms containing “Negro,” circa 2003

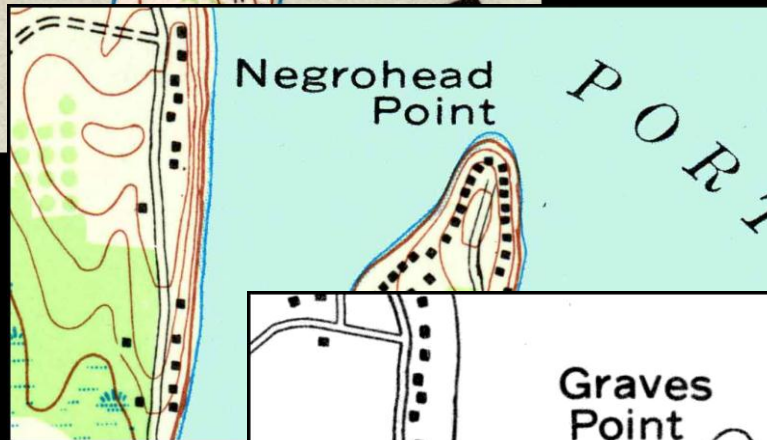


Geographic Names Information System (GNIS), 2003

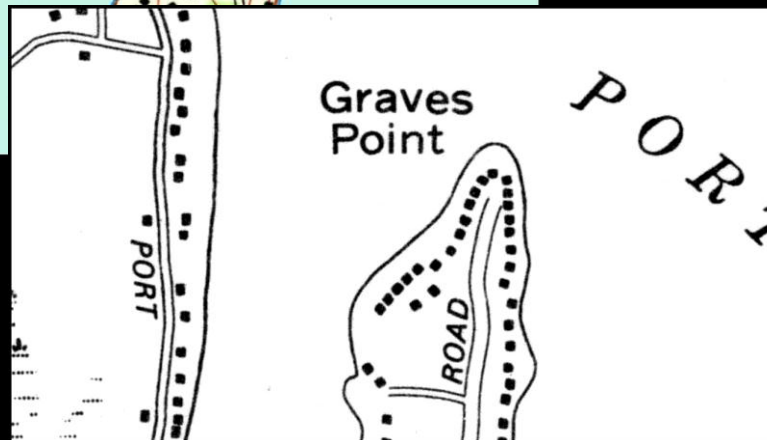
A Transition in Upstate New York



1943, USGS

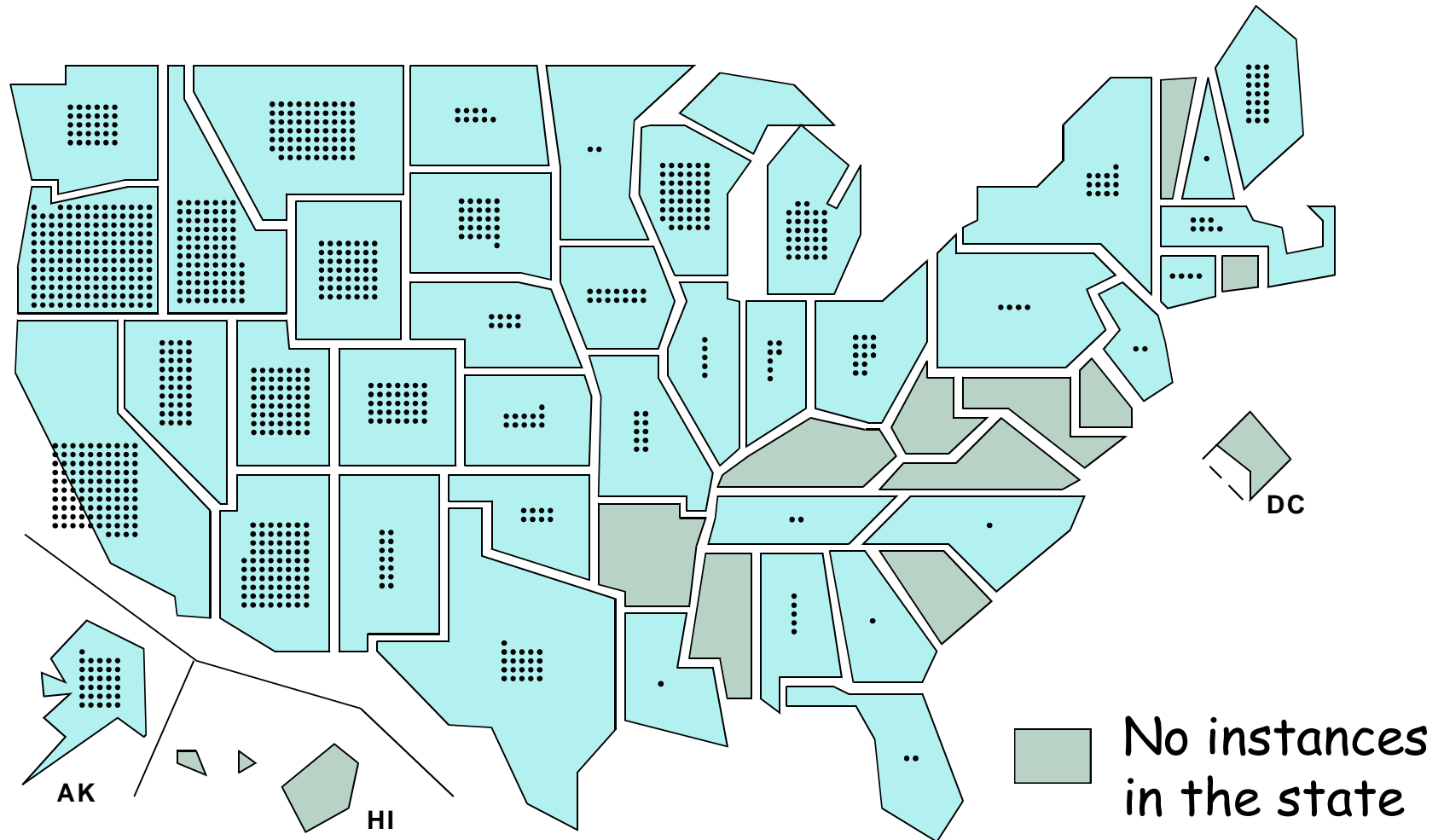


1953, USGS



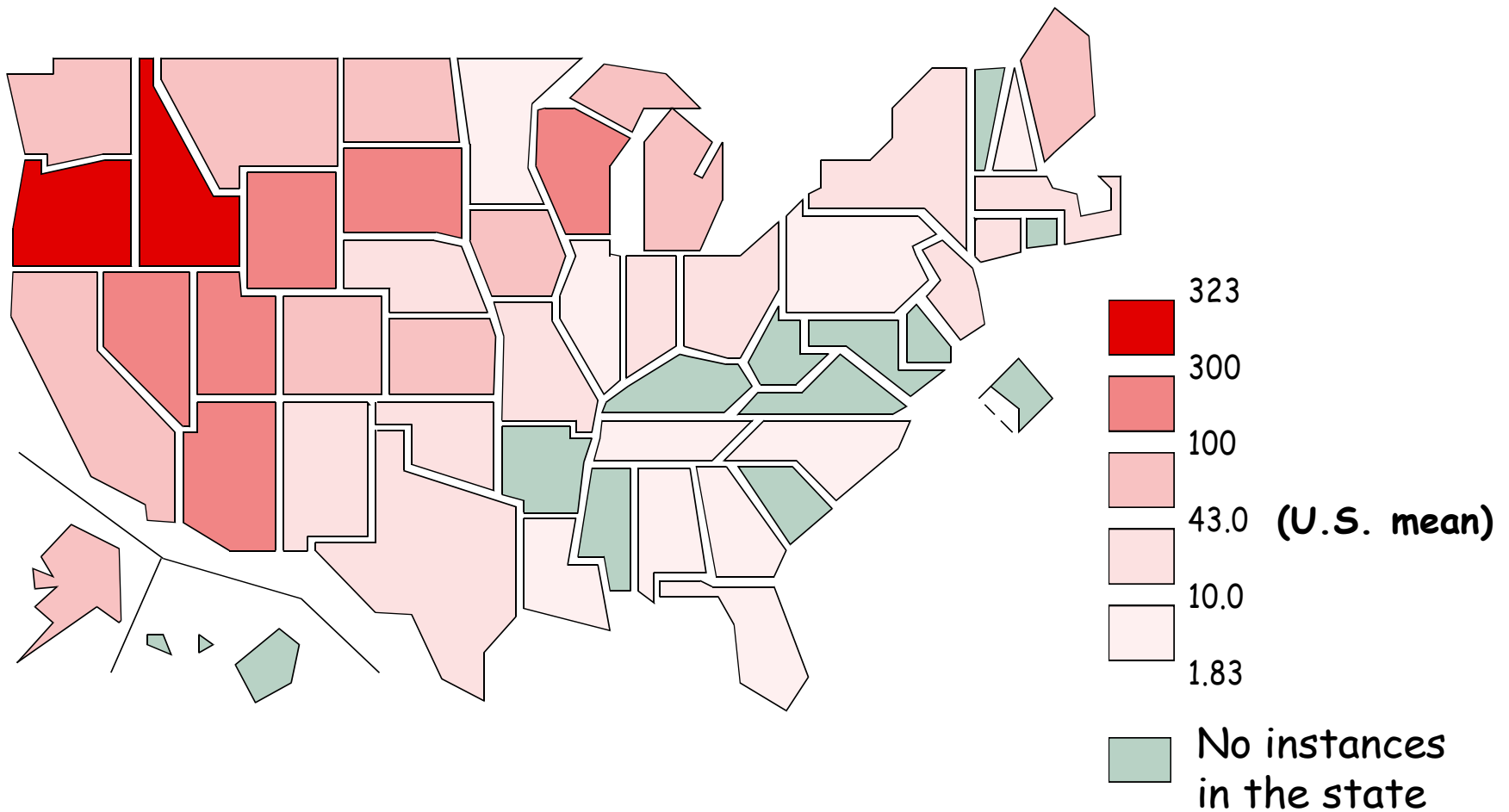
1977,
New York
DoT

Toponyms containing “Squaw,” c, 2003



Geographic Names Information System (GNIS), 2003

Current toponyms containing “Squaw”



Geographic Names Information System (GNIS), 2003

Replacement Requirements

- No duplicate names
- Name must be locally relevant, or commemorate a person of great importance
- No names commemorating persons deceased less than five years
- Renaming is a formal process
- State, tribal approval (generally)
- Other rules



National Mapping Information

Feature Name:	Squaw Valley
Feature Type:	populated place
Elevation (feet):	1630
Estimated Population (2000):	2,691
Description:	14.4 km (9 mi) north-northeast of Orange Cove and 48 km (30 mi) east of Fresno. (US-T121)
State:	California
County:	Fresno
USGS 7.5' x 7.5' Map:	Tucker Mountain
latitude (nn°nn'nn"):	364425N
Longitude (nnn°nn'nn"):	1191445W



Denali, a.k.a. Mount McKinley

Barbara Miers, flickr | Creative Commons



WILLIAM A. DICKEY,
~~Alaska~~ (or Seattle, Wash.).

729 New York

W. Dickey has had an eventful life. He went to Seattle and Montesino, Wash., and was in various banking and other businesses. He has been married for some years and has children. For the last four years he has been much of the time in Alaska, where he owns several claims. He discovered and named Mount McKinley, the highest mountain in the United States. The *New York Sun* published his account of this. His descriptions of some of his trips taken when the mercury was frozen in the glass are

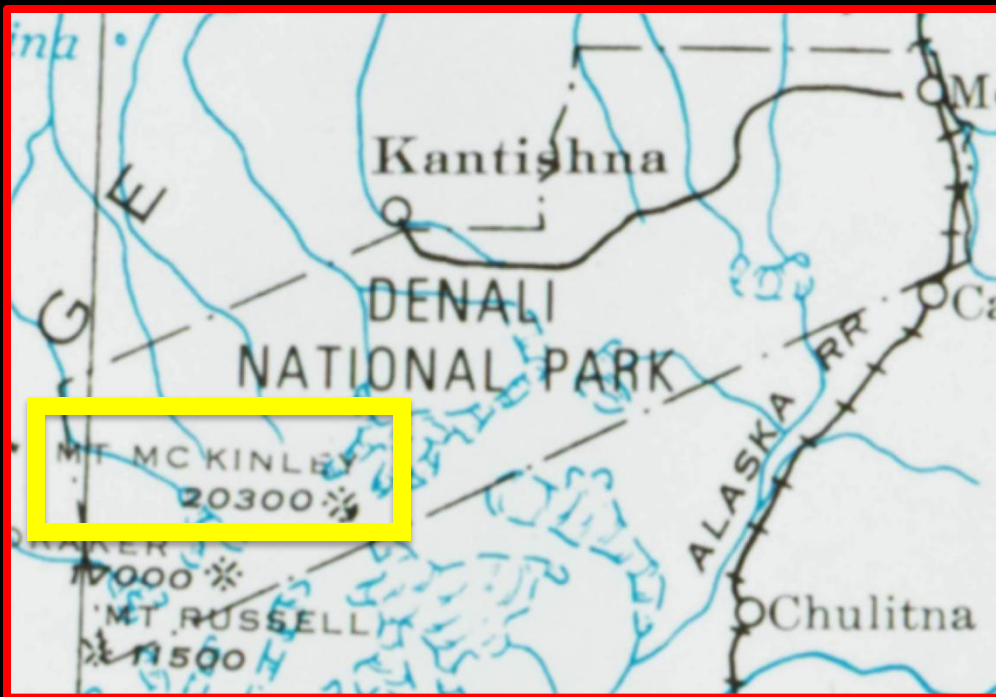
A NARRATIVE OF THE
FIRST COMPLETE ASCENT OF THE HIGHEST
PEAK IN NORTH AMERICA

THE ASCENT OF
DENALI
(MOUNT MCKINLEY)

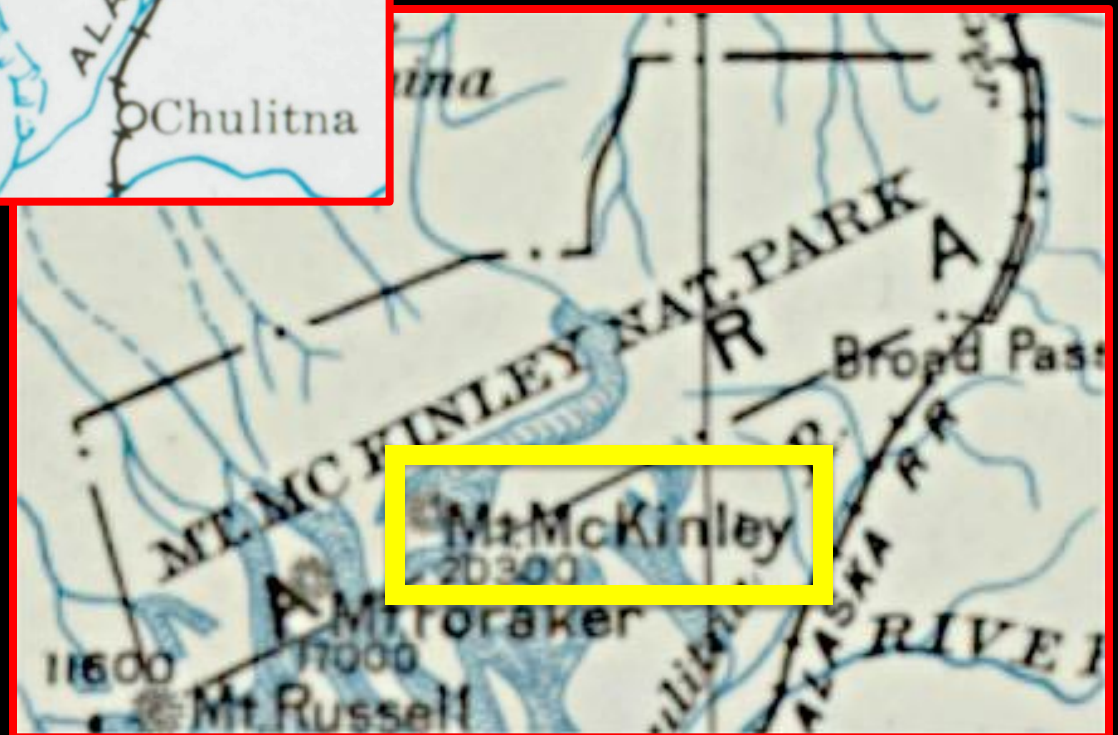
HUDSON STUCK

To the relatively large Indian population of those wide regions of the interior of Alaska from which the mountains are visible they have always borne Indian names. The natives of the middle Yukon, of the lower three hundred miles of the Tanana and its tributaries, of the upper Kusko-kwim have always called these mountains “Denali” (Den-ah’li) and “Denali’s Wife”—either precisely as here written, or with a dialectical difference in pronunciation so slight as to be negligible.

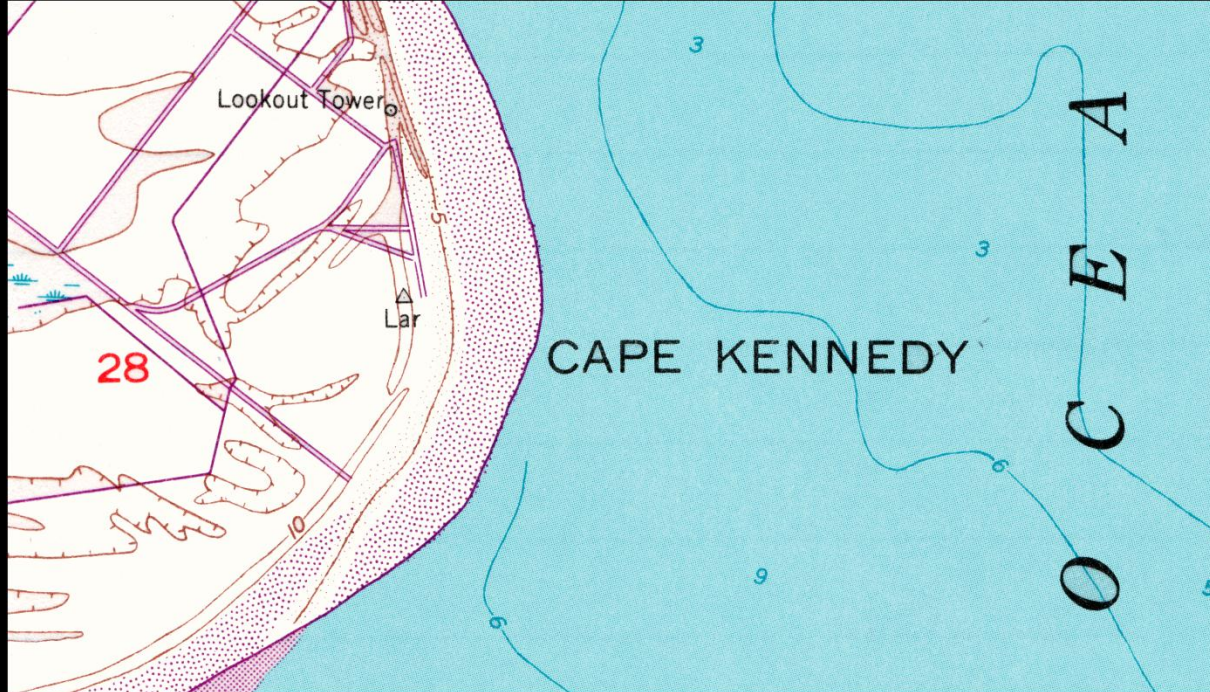




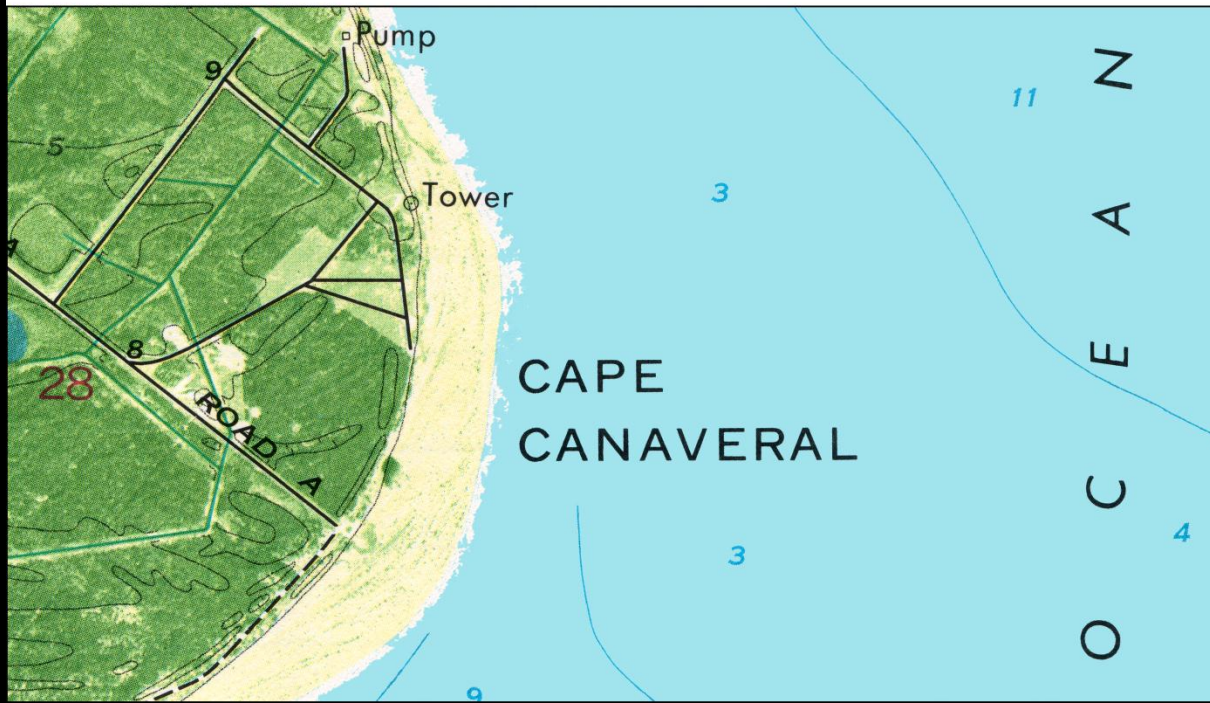
U.S. Geological Survey,
Map of Alaska,
 1:500,000, **1996**



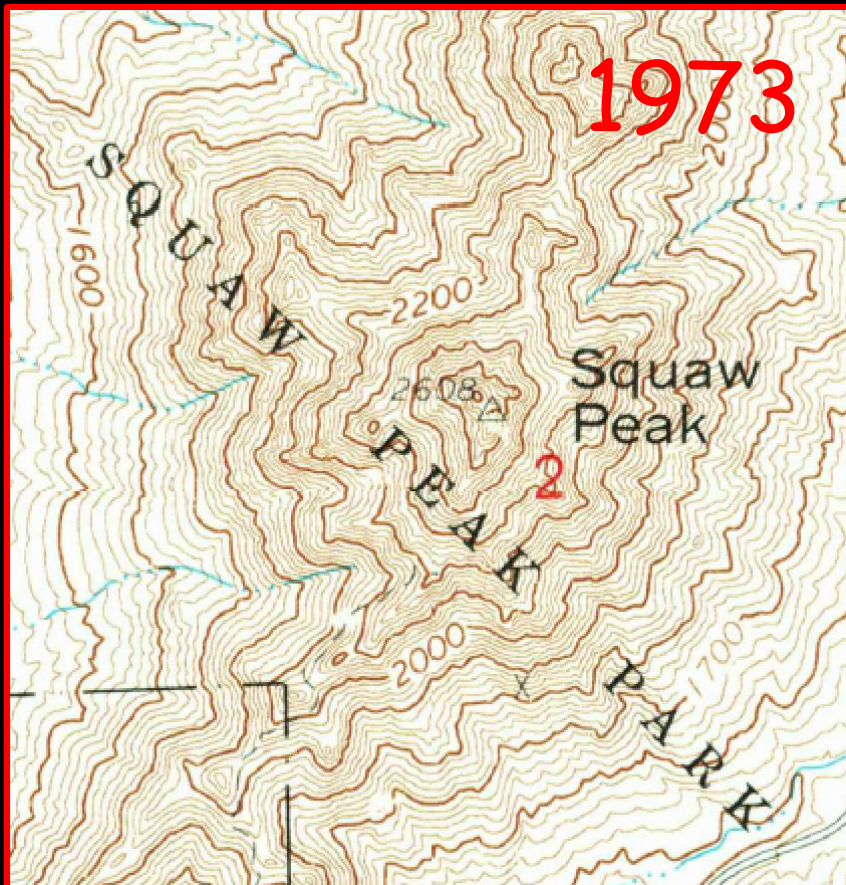
U.S. Geological Survey,
Map of Alaska,
 1:500,000, **1936**



U.S. Geological
Survey, 1970



U.S. Geological
Survey, 1976



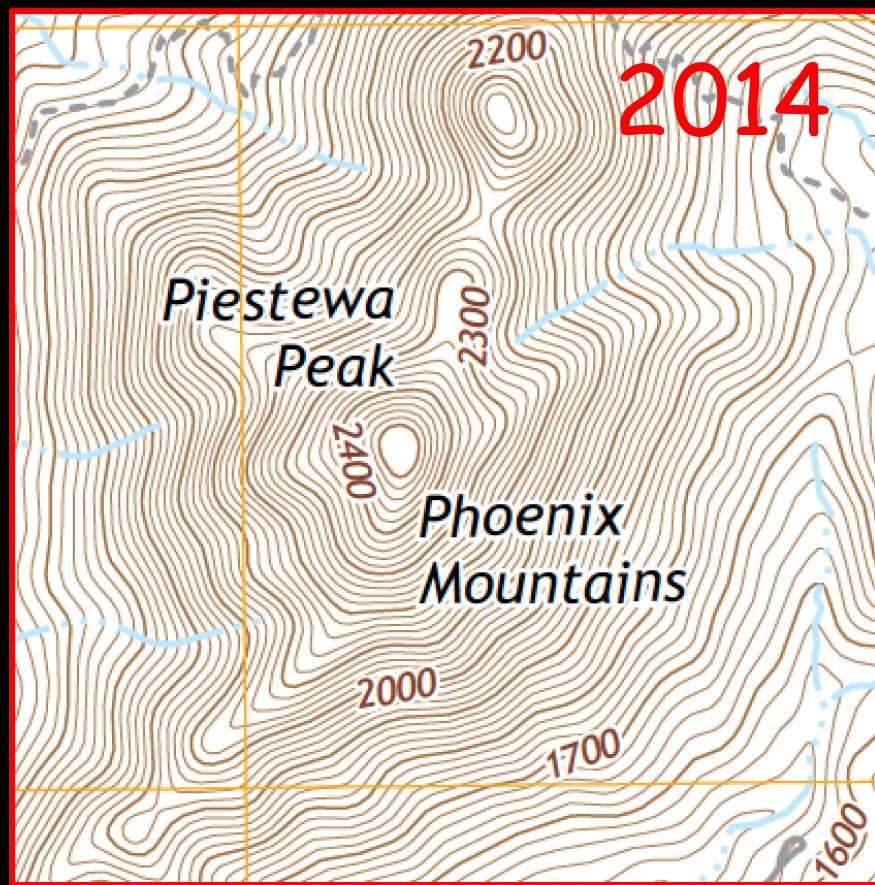
SUNNYSLOPE, ARIZ.

N3330—W11200/7.5

1965

PHOTOREVISED 1973

AMS 3551 II SE—SERIES V898



SUNNYSLOPE QUADRANGLE

ARIZONA-MARICOPA CO.

7.5-MINUTE SERIES

SUNNYSLOPE, AZ

2014

U.S. Geological
Survey, 1995

macron

Kīpukapuāulu

BM
4092

ROAD

4000

• Bird Park
Picnic Area

BM 3951

U.S. Geological
Survey, **1981**

Kipuka Puauhu

BM X 4092

ROAD

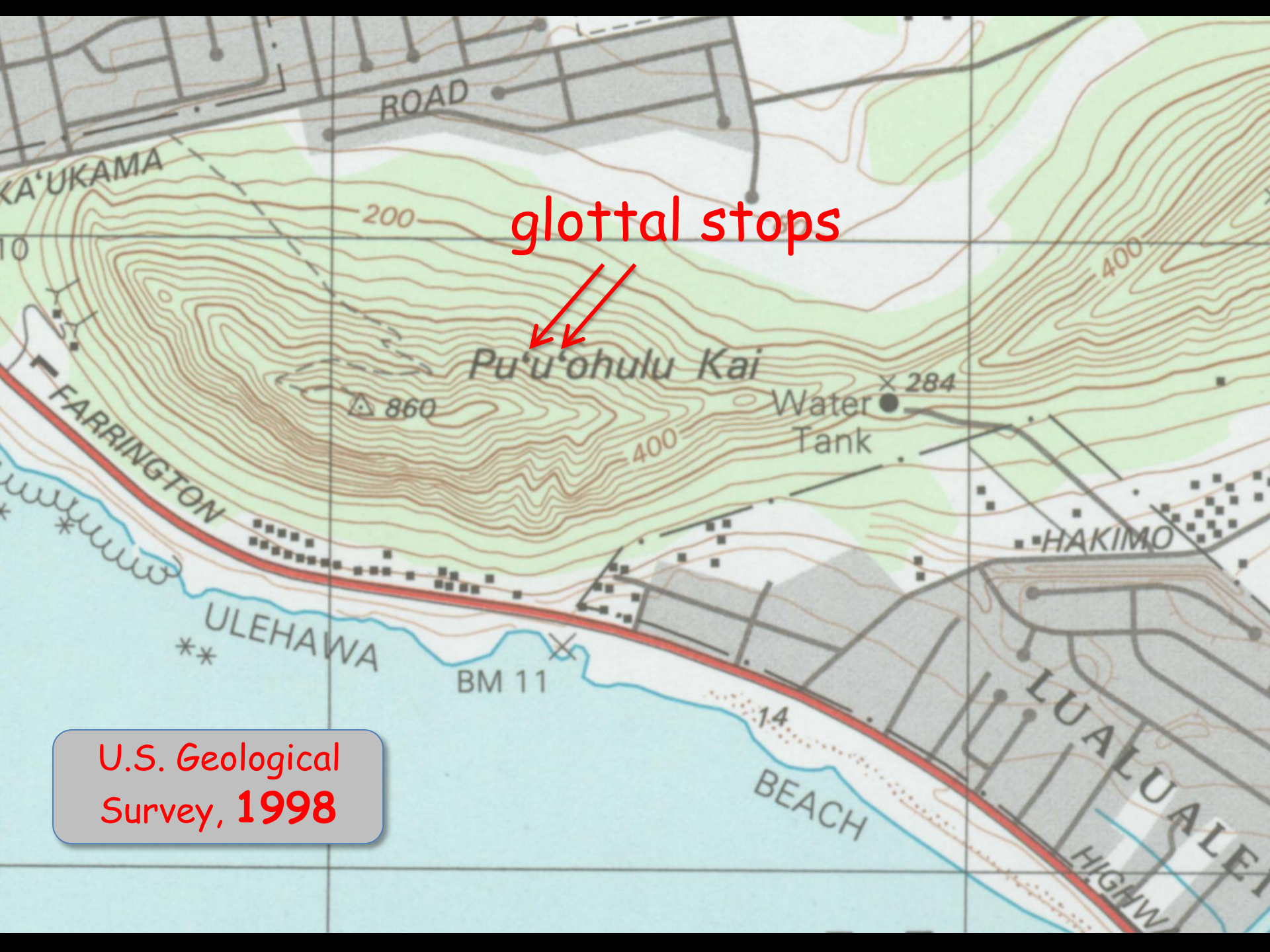
4000

Bird Park
Picnic Area

X BM 3951

WD

Sc



glottal stops



Pu'u'ohulu Kai

Water Tank x 284

HAKIMO

ULEHAWA

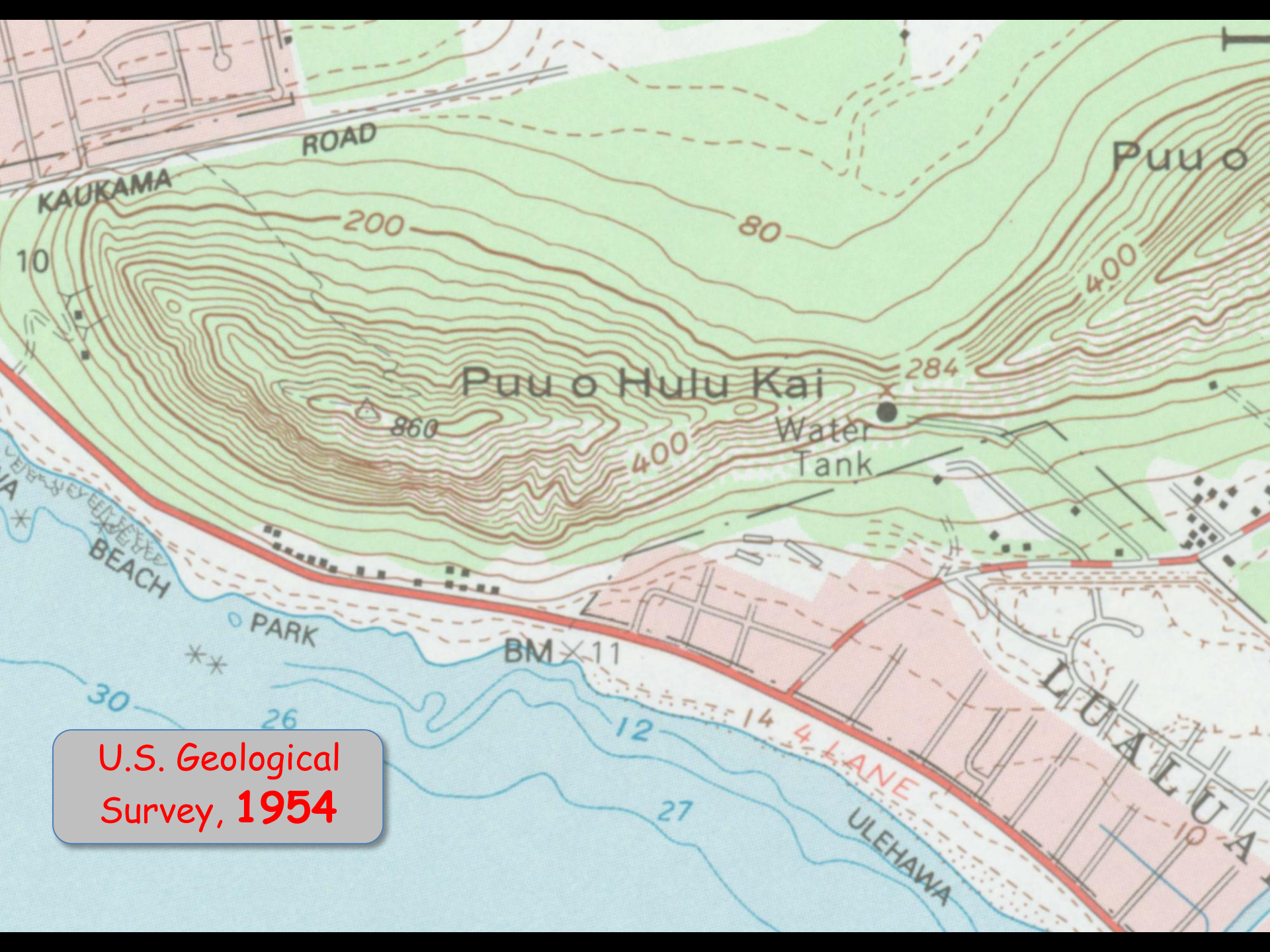
BM 11

14

BEACH

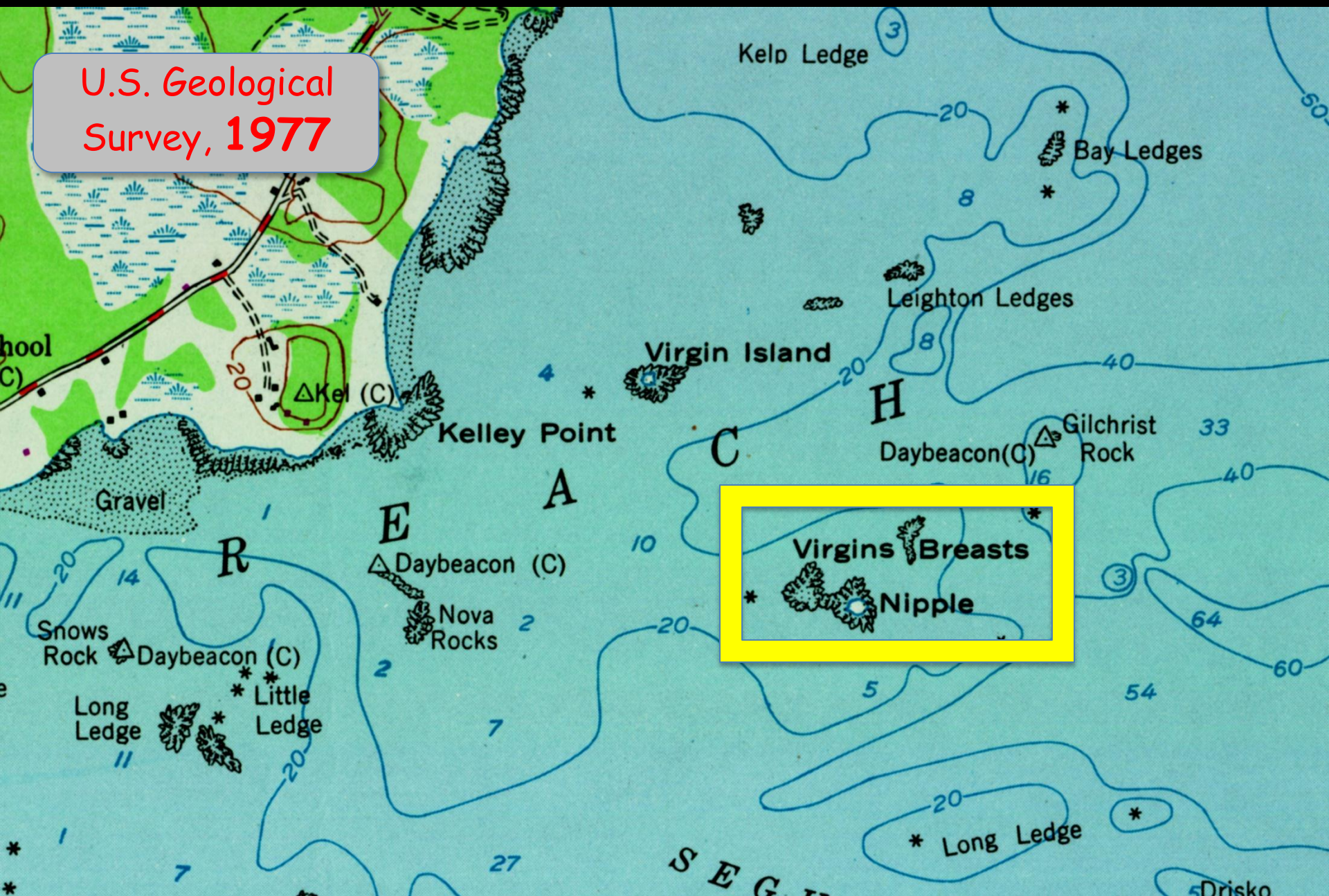
LU'ALU'ALEI
HIGHWAY

U.S. Geological
Survey, 1998

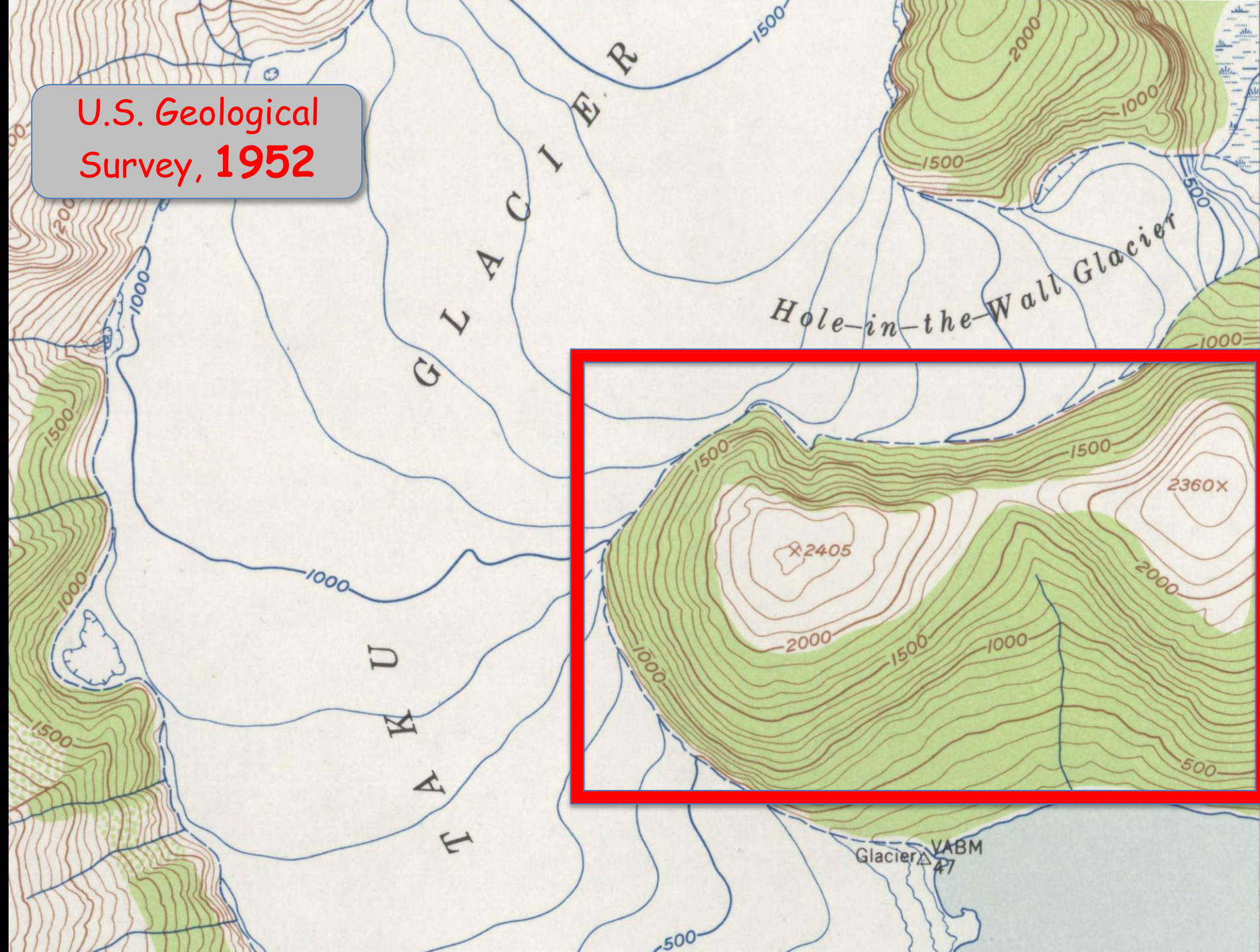


U.S. Geological
Survey, 1954

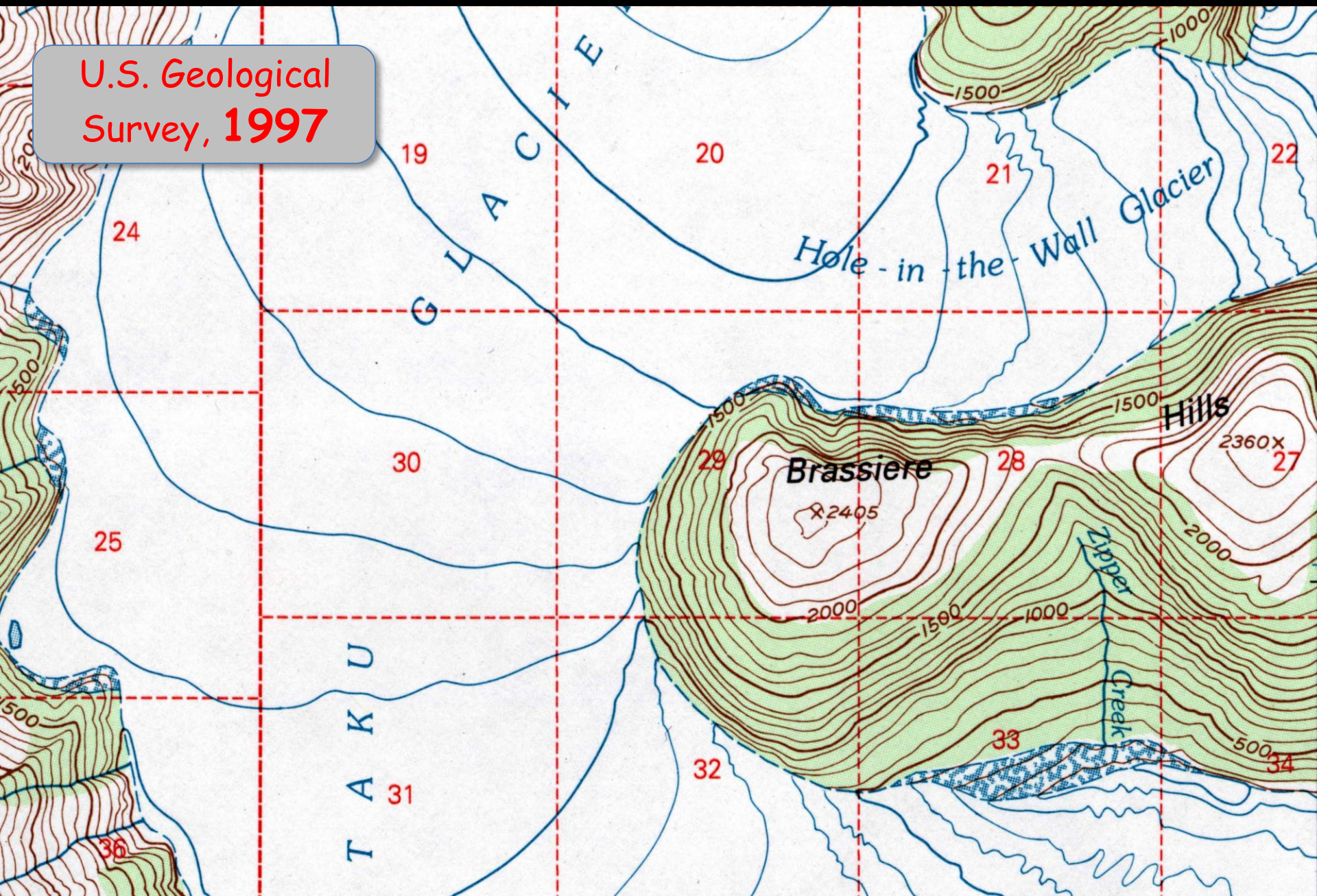
U.S. Geological
Survey, 1977



U.S. Geological
Survey, 1952



U.S. Geological
Survey, 1997



Questions?